Herpes Risk Highest in Young Black Women

BY HEIDI SPLETE
FROM A CONGRESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES RESEARCH

QUEBEC CITY – The incidence of herpes simplex virus type 2 in the United States has remained stable within gender and ethnic groups over the past 2 decades, with young black women remaining at the highest risk for infection, according to an analysis of data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys for 1988-1994 and 1999-2008.

Herpes simplex virus type 2 (HSV-2) infections have a 16% seroprevalence among 14- to 49-year-olds in the United States, said Dr. Sarah M. Gerver of Imperial College, London. Dr. Gerver presented the findings at the meeting.

She and her associates at Imperial College and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta combined NHANES data with a predictive model to estimate HSV-2 incidence per 100 person-years at risk.

Overall, the age-adjusted incidence rates over the past 20 years were stable in all sex and ethnic groups with two exceptions, noted Dr. Gerver and her colleagues.

Among women, ‘nearly 60% of all new infections were in non-Hispanic blacks, a group that accounts for less than 15% of the female population [in the United States].’

The recommended initial screening age for cervical disease is 18 years in 2007.

Victoria, where the program began in the first year of high school, and 71% for currently estimated at 79% for girls in the United States, said Dr. Sarah M. Gerver of Imperial College, London. Dr. Gerver presented the findings at the meeting.

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